

# EXHIBIT 28

May 12<sup>st</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

I, Gokay Mediceler, am a Founder & Partner at [REDACTED]. I have known Mr. Erden Arkan since 2001. We met through our mutual friend Elif Onural at a social gathering. I had the privilege of getting to know him further and working with him on multiple projects in the following years. He struck me as a fatherly figure and a role model to the younger generation around him. I witnessed his willingness to help, teach, and genuine kindness toward others, also I experienced this firsthand.

He is always known in our community as a pillar of kindness, honor, hard work, authenticity, and generosity. I feel very lucky to have met him and to have him as a mentor at work and in life.

Sincerely,

Gokay Mediceler  
Founder & Partner

[REDACTED]



# EXHIBIT 29

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Metin Ozkuzey, and I've had the privilege of knowing Erden Arkan for over 20 years, since 2002. I first met Erden through the Turkish Business Forum (TBF), where he was one of the founding members. At the time, I had recently moved from the San Francisco Bay Area to New Jersey after meeting my future wife—ironically, at a TBF event in New York. I had been leading the San Francisco chapter of the organization, and Erden immediately welcomed me into the East Coast community.

Erden went out of his way to introduce me to other local business leaders and include me in professional and social events. What started as a professional connection quickly evolved into a deep friendship. Over the years, Erden has become a mentor, sounding board, and even a client—but above all, a constant presence in my life.

One moment that stands out took place shortly after my move to New Jersey. It was a difficult time. I had left behind my job, friends, and support network. The cultural shift from the tech-driven West Coast to the finance-heavy East Coast was jarring, and I felt isolated. Erden's invitations to local events, his warm check-ins, and his unprompted generosity truly sustained me during that transition. At the time, I had little to offer—no wealth, no connections—but Erden showed me kindness without calculation. That's just who he is.

And I am far from alone. Over the years, I've witnessed Erden quietly help students find jobs, sponsor community events, and offer support to anyone who asked, without fanfare or expectation.

In my profession as an entrepreneur, having served over 300,000 customers, I've developed a strong radar for character. In all our business dealings, Erden never once asked for special treatment or favors—an increasingly rare quality.

Today, I run a retail and e-commerce company called [REDACTED] which I founded in 2008. Before that, I worked in engineering and technology, including at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and helped lead [REDACTED] acquisition by [REDACTED], where I served as Director of Engineering. I



immigrated to the U.S. in 1991 and currently live in Montclair, NJ with my wife, Dr. Idil Bilgin, and our two children.

I share this background to emphasize that my perspective on character is shaped by decades of professional and personal experience. I can say, without hesitation, that Erden Arkan is one of the most decent, selfless, and community-minded people I have ever met.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide further detail or context.

Sincerely,

*M. Ozkurey*

[REDACTED]

# EXHIBIT 30

May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Orhan Taner. I've known Erden Arkan for approximately 30 years. I first met him and his wife, Itir, while I was living and working in New York City as a Managing Director at Bankers Trust Company, a major U.S. investment bank.

My wife and I had recently returned to Manhattan in the mid-1990s, and Erden was one of the first non-Wall Street professionals I met in New York. From the moment we were introduced, a deep and lasting friendship began. During my fast-paced life in finance, getting to know Erden felt like a breath of fresh air. We would talk for hours—about literature, music, global cultures, history, politics, and food. His intellect was matched only by his warmth and generosity.

Erden is about ten years my senior, and I've been incredibly fortunate to learn from his wisdom over the years. He is a thoughtful father, a successful and visionary business leader, and above all, someone with a deep commitment to helping others. His advice and example have served as a guide not just to me, but to many others who have been lucky enough to know him as a friend, mentor, or colleague.

One of Erden's most defining qualities is his calm and steady presence. His ability to remain composed and help others remain grounded—even in difficult or high-pressure situations—is remarkable. That kind of quiet leadership has always inspired me.

When my wife and I decided to start a family two decades ago, I often thought of Erden. Watching how he and Itir raised their two daughters—helping them succeed in American society while maintaining a strong connection to their Turkish heritage—gave me a real-life model of what thoughtful, value-driven parenting looks like.

In the late 1990s, Erden and I, along with about a dozen Turkish-American professionals in New York, co-founded a nonprofit organization called the Turkish-American Business Forum (TABF). The mission of TABF was to mentor and support younger generations of Turkish-Americans as they began taking on leadership roles in fields such as finance, law, healthcare, transportation, and construction. From the beginning, it was Erden's vision and insistence that TABF remain fully independent—free from any political, domestic, or foreign government affiliations. This principled stance was instrumental in building the organization's credibility and long-term success.

Thanks to Erden's tireless leadership and foresight, we were able to organize dozens of professional networking events, panel discussions, and cultural gatherings that positively

impacted the lives of hundreds of young professionals. Many of those individuals still speak of the guidance and sense of belonging they felt during those early years—something that would not have happened without Erden's dedication.

Erden Arkan is a person of deep integrity. He has touched the lives of so many—including mine—and I am honored to know him and to have worked alongside him for so many years. Please feel free to reach out if I can provide more assistance.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Orhan Taner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Orhan Taner



# EXHIBIT 31

Tamer Seckin, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED].com

Phone: [REDACTED]

Date: 05/15/25

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Character Reference for Mr. Erden Arkan

Dear Judge Ho,

My name is [REDACTED] Tamer Seckin. I am a [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED]  
at [REDACTED]. I am also the co-founder of the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED], alongside Padma Lakshmi, where we have worked for years to bring  
awareness, education, and expert medical care to women suffering from this often-  
misunderstood disease. Most recently, the [REDACTED] established the  
[REDACTED] bearing my name.

More importantly, I have had the honor of calling Erden Arkan a dear friend for more  
than 35 years. We met in New York in the late 1980s through mutual friends in the  
Turkish-American community. Over time, our friendship has grown into something far  
deeper—akin to family.

I write not to excuse, but to share with you the truth of the man I know—one whose  
loyalty, compassion, and integrity have been unwavering over time. I respectfully ask that  
you consider the full breadth of his character and the quiet, steady life of service and  
generosity that he has lived.

There are countless examples I could share, but a few stand out that I believe capture who Erden truly is.

More than two decades ago, following a complex medical procedure of my own, Erden appeared at my side daily—without being asked. He brought food, helped with errands, and even cared for my elderly father who was visiting. His kindness was steady, unspoken, and without any expectation of thanks. That is who he is.

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Erden organized food and medicine deliveries for elderly, Turkish-speaking neighbors in Queens—many of whom were too scared or isolated to leave home. I personally witnessed him go door to door, never seeking recognition, only driven by compassion and duty.

Erden and his wife Itir were also instrumental in supporting the early efforts of the Endometriosis Foundation. They volunteered their time, offered strategic support, helped raise funds, and were deeply involved in expanding our school education initiatives. Through these efforts, we reached more than 40,000 high school students with information on menstrual health and its relationship to long-term well-being and disease awareness. The Arkan family supported our work from every angle—not out of obligation, but from shared belief in a greater good.

Erden is also a profoundly devoted family man. His wife, Itir, recently retired as the head of the [REDACTED] department at [REDACTED]—an accomplished [REDACTED] and an equal partner in every sense. Together they've raised two wonderful daughters, both now mothers. Erden is a proud grandfather of four, and it's abundantly clear that his deepest joy comes from simply being present in their lives. His love and dedication to his family is evident in everything he does.

Among our many joyful memories—countless dinners, community gatherings, and conversations—one that stands out is our visit to the home of the late Peter Yarrow, of Peter, Paul & Mary. That afternoon was filled with music, laughter, and deep friendship. A photograph from that day still hangs in my library. It reminds me not only of the bonds we share, but of the kind of man Erden is—gentle, warm, full of life. He is also a gifted cook and host, known for bringing people together around a table with warmth, generosity, and unmatched hospitality.

Since his name was linked to the investigation involving Mayor Adams, I have seen



firsthand how profoundly this has affected him. He is deeply remorseful. He has never attempted to deflect, deny, or minimize his actions. Instead, he has consistently expressed sincere regret—for the situation itself, for the strain on his family, and for the trust that may have been compromised.

I am confident that this will never happen again. Erden is a fundamentally decent man who has taken full responsibility and is actively engaged in reflection and restitution. This experience has changed him, and it has already exacted a heavy toll.

The media scrutiny alone has been relentless and deeply damaging. His name has appeared repeatedly in headlines—often exaggerated or misrepresented—subjecting him and his family to a level of humiliation and reputational harm that far outweighs what most could withstand. Yet he continues to carry himself with grace and humility.

Thank you, Judge Ho, for taking the time to consider this letter. I know the responsibility you bear is immense. I share this letter not only out of loyalty, but out of a firm belief that Erden Arkan is a man who still has more good to give. If I can be of further assistance, I would be honored to speak with you.

With deepest respect,

*Tamer Seckin*

Tamer Seckin, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Email:

Phone:

# EXHIBIT 32



May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Mehmet Nakas. I reside and work in both New York and New Jersey, where I run a fabrication business. I have been very fortunate to know Mr. Erden Arkan for over six years now.

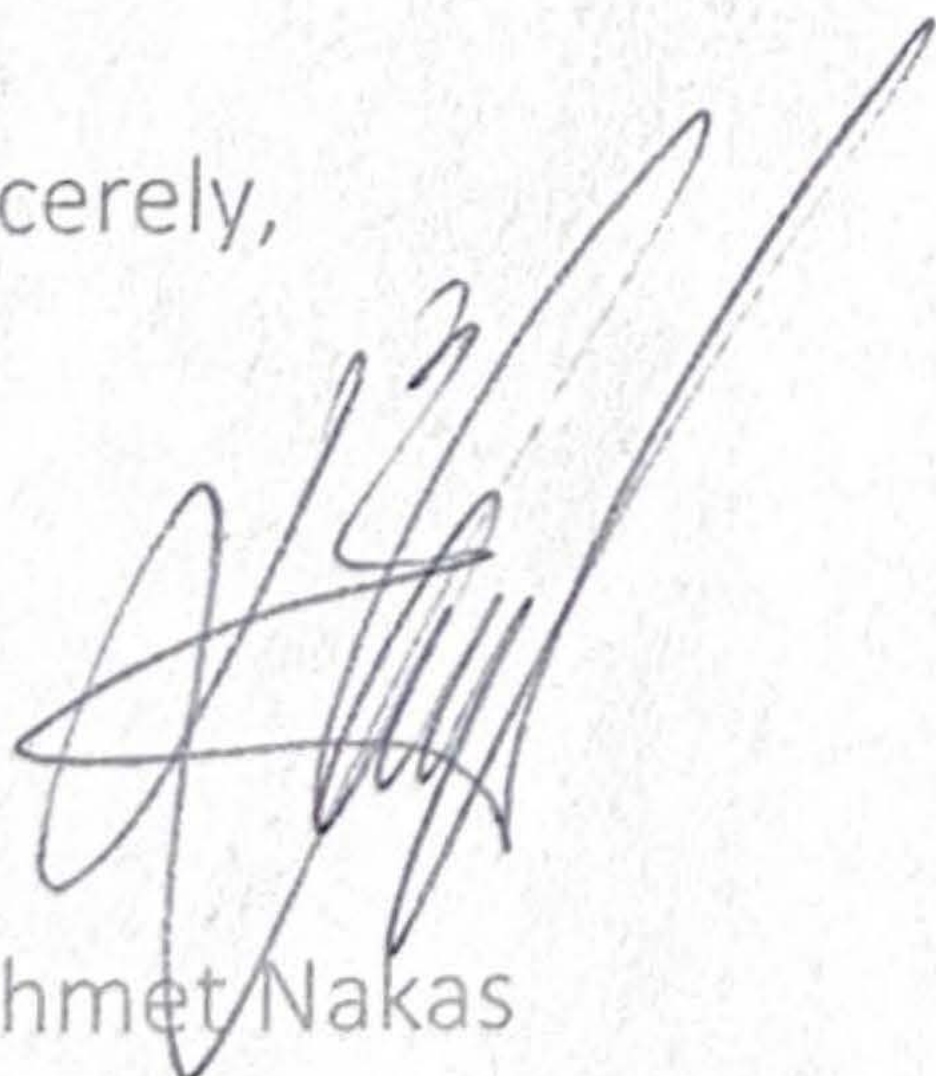
We initially met through a professional relationship, but over time, that connection naturally developed into a friendship. The saying "business is business, and friendship is separate" simply does not apply to Erden. He is equally fair and generous – whether with business colleagues or with friends.

Through our growing friendship, I've had the opportunity to see Erden's vast life experiences and it made me feel lucky to be able to understand how he values others. One of the things that fascinates me most about Erden is his ability to connect and communicate with people from all walks of life. This is a rare and admirable quality, especially in today's world.

In 2021, our business facility was hit by a flood. During that very challenging time, Erden offered tremendous support and guidance. His calm wisdom helped guide us through the crisis and ultimately made us stronger than before. He always believed in our potential, and his positive mindset, coupled with generous support, showed us how true friendship in difficult times can be more valuable than anything material.

I know deep in my heart that Mr. Erden is a deeply principled man—someone who is increasingly rare to find. It has always been a pleasure to be around him, in both good times and bad. I am available should you need to ask me any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Nakas', with a large, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Mehmet Nakas

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]



# EXHIBIT 33

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Baris Ozturk. I am the owner of an IT company, and Mr. Erden Arkan is one of my clients. Additionally, I serve as the volunteer-based U.S. liaison for AKUT, a Türkiye-based nonprofit organization specializing in search, rescue, and disaster response operations.

Though my initial connection with Mr. Erden Arkan was through professional means, our relationship quickly grew into something deeper and personal. In a very short time, Mr. Arkan became "Erden Abi" to me—a Turkish term meaning "older brother," as for many who know him personally, indicative of the affection and respect felt

Most of our interactions and collaborations have revolved around philanthropic and humanitarian causes. Whenever there has been an earthquake or another significant disaster in Türkiye requiring support, Erden Abi has consistently been among the first to respond generously. His support is not limited to financial contributions alone; he regularly volunteers his own time and expertise, serving as a mentor to many young engineers and engineering students, helping them navigate their careers and personal development.

Erden Abi embodies the spirit and resilience of a true New Yorker. A prime example of this occurred during Hurricane Sandy, when my search and rescue organization mobilized the Turkish-American community to deliver urgently needed aid to the Rockaways. Erden Abi stepped forward immediately, providing crucial contributions that allowed us to procure and distribute essential supplies swiftly.

There is a particular personal experience that profoundly illustrates Erden Abi's kindness and generosity—one that I will never forget. Several years ago, during a family vacation in a small town where Erden Abi coincidentally has a summer residence, I experienced a sports accident. Thankfully, my injury wasn't severe, but I urgently needed crutches, an item nearly impossible to find during a weekend in this remote location.

Desperate, I reached out to Erden Abi, hoping he might know someone who had recently recovered from a leg injury and had crutches available. Without hesitation, he informed me that he had kept a pair "just in case" from when one of his family members had previously needed them and immediately proceeded to personally deliver them to my hotel, braving the oppressive August heat of nearly 100 degrees.

This gesture, though seemingly small, encapsulates his genuine character and unwavering commitment to helping others in their moment of need. It is this generosity of spirit, combined with his ongoing contributions to humanitarian and educational causes, that makes Erden Abi not just an exemplary community leader but also a cherished friend and mentor to so many, including myself.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Baris Ozturk', with a stylized, flowing script.

Baris Ozturk

[REDACTED]

P: [REDACTED]  
F: [REDACTED]  
C: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# EXHIBIT 34



May 21st, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Aycan Sancak. I have known Mr. Erden Arkan since 2009, I was working as a nanny for his grandchildren. We were in frequent contact with Mr. Arkan during the children's school routines, as well as during holidays. During these periods, he engaged in enjoyable activities with the children and aided with childcare. He was an extremely hands-on grandfather. We also had the opportunities for informal conversation over coffee and tea. I felt like a valuable member of the family during this chat environment with Mr. Arkan.

Mr. Arkan and his family were more like a family than an employer for me while I was living alone in New York. During our conversation with him, I felt like his daughter because he frequently inquired about my family, listened to my concerns about my residence or other problems and helped by giving advice. In fact, when my family came to visit me, he and his family arranged for me to stay in their apartment instead because the apartment I lived in was not suitable for so many people.

Mr. Arkan even helped my roommate at the time, who he did not know at all. She had an unexpected health problem and no family living nearby. Mr. Arkan and his daughter led the charge on fundraising to get her the care she needed in NYC and then to fly her comfortably back to Turkey.

Maybe because he has 2 daughter and a granddaughter – Mr. Arkan takes women's education very seriously. While I was working with them – the family started a charity drive to buy and distribute more than 10,000 books to female children.

Mr. Arkan is an individual who treats everyone with the same gentleness. I am so grateful for the way he treated me like one of the family while I was living away from my own family in New York.

I truly believe our society needs more kind, considerate and giving people like him. Please feel free to reach out if you need any further clarifications.

Sincerely,



Aycan Sancak



# EXHIBIT 35

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Zishan Ugurlu. I am an award-winning [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. I have worked extensively as a theater artist in New York and abroad since 1995. I am also a [REDACTED]. I hold two MFA degrees: one from Mimar Sinan University in Istanbul, Turkey, where I completed a directing thesis, and at Columbia University, where I completed the Acting Program. I hold a Ph.D from Ankara University. I have been teaching at [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], since 2004.

I have had the distinct honor of knowing Mr. Erden Arkan since 1995. Over the past three decades, our relationship has evolved from a professional connection into a deeply meaningful bond rooted in mutual respect, trust, and shared values. Before I ever met him, I had heard his name repeatedly in the Turkish community in New York—always associated with generosity, integrity, and his unwavering support of artists and those in need.

When I was directing a theater production in the 1990s, I approached Mr. Arkan for support. He listened with sincere attention, asked thoughtful questions, and offered meaningful assistance without hesitation. That kind of active, empathetic engagement became a hallmark of his support for not only me, but countless Turkish artists living and working in New York. Through his generosity—financial, logistical, and emotional—he created a platform where our voices could be heard and our work could thrive. When I directed shows, if I needed a truck, he would find someone to help me. When I needed birch trees for a show, they would arrive in a few days in front of the theater. He helped so many people unconditionally. He is one of the most important supporters of my career as an artist after Ellen Stewart, the founder of La MaMa Theater. His impact has been critical to the survival and success of the Turkish artistic community here.

From 2000 to 2010, I served as the curator for the art gallery at the Marmara Manhattan Hotel, where Mr. Arkan gave me the opportunity to lead exhibitions

and create programming that showcased diverse artistic voices. He always treated me—and the artists we worked with—with kindness, respect, and transparency. When challenges arose, he made sure we faced them together. He believed in collaborative problem-solving and never lost sight of the human element in our work.

Most importantly however, I want to mention that in 2004, while my father was terminally ill in Istanbul, I found myself in the painful position of not being able to afford a plane ticket to be with him. Without my asking, Mr. Arkan purchased the ticket so I could travel home. My father passed away when I was next to him. For people like me, living as an immigrant, separated from our parents, there is a big nightmare: not being there for family when they need us the most. But I was next to my father because of Erden Bey's thoughtfulness and kindness. This is why to this day, I always send Mr. Arkan a message on Father's Day!

Mr. Arkan is, quite simply, one of the most generous and kind people I have ever known. He has been a pillar of support in my life and career. I respectfully ask that you consider the profound, positive difference he has made in so many lives, including mine. I am available should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

*Zishan Ugurlu*

Zishan Ugurlu

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# EXHIBIT 36

May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Serdar Ilhan and I have been living in the United States since 1989 and in New York City since 1991. One of the very first people I met when I arrived in this city was Erden Arkan and his family. I will never forget how kind and compassionate he was to me during those early days—especially how he supported me during a difficult time.

Erden has been more than a friend—he has been like an older brother to me, as well as to many others in our community. Whenever someone needed advice, a job, or moral support, he was always there. He has consistently surrounded himself with good people, and his life has been defined by generosity, integrity, and commitment to others.

Erden has made lasting contributions to our city in many ways. Through his construction company, he helped shape the New York skyline with meaningful and well-executed building projects. But beyond bricks and mortar, his impact has been cultural, humanitarian, and deeply personal for many of us.

As a venue owner, promoter, and event organizer in New York City since 1997, I've brought music from Europe, the Balkans, and Turkey to major venues including SummerStage in Central Park, Bryant Park, Lincoln Center, Town Hall, and more. I've also worked with the U.S. State Department's musical diplomacy programs through Carnegie Hall and organized the New York Gypsy Festival for the past 20 years. Erden Arkan has been one of my most steadfast supporters throughout this journey.

Some of the many events Erden has supported include:

- **The Turkish-Greek Friendship Concert** at Town Hall in 1999, featuring Zülfü Livaneli and Maria Farandouri. This landmark event was made possible through his support, alongside Ahmet Ertegun.
- **Jazz Made in Turkey Festival** at Lincoln Center in 2002, a three-day event supported by Erden along with cultural icons Ahmet Ertegun, Arif Mardin, and İlhan Mimaroğlu.
- **The 1999 and 2024 Turkish Earthquake Relief Concert**, where Erden was the main sponsor, organizing aid including thousands of pounds of food and clothing to send to the victims in Turkey.

These are just a few of over 15 major cultural and humanitarian projects that could not have happened without Erden's dedication and support.

Erden Arkan and his family have long been pillars of our community—respected, admired, and beloved by all who know them. I have always looked up to Erden for his achievements in this city and his unwavering commitment to uplifting others.

In every way, Erden Arkan has exemplified what it means to be a responsible, generous, and deeply valued member of society. It is with the utmost sincerity and respect that I offer this statement in support of his character.

Sincerely,



Serdar Ilhan

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Tel: [Redacted]

Fax [Redacted]

www. [Redacted]

www. [Redacted]

[www.istanbulive.com](http://www.istanbulive.com)

[www.nygypsyfest.com](http://www.nygypsyfest.com)



# EXHIBIT 37

[REDACTED]

## Corporation

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Christian Karavolas. I am a small business owner in New York City – I serve as the president of [REDACTED], an [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for over 27 years.

I met Erden Arkan over 40 years ago before he even immigrated to the United States. I met him in 1985 at the KISKA Annual Ball in Istanbul, Turkey. He was introduced to me by the Gursel Family, one of the most philanthropic families in all of Turkey. That introduction led to a decades-long friendship built on respect. In my many years of knowing him, Erden has consistently demonstrated integrity, compassion for others, and a deep commitment to his family and to his community.

Over the years, I have seen Erden devote himself wholeheartedly to helping young Turkish artists establish themselves in the United States. He organized exhibitions, cultural events, and gatherings to support and promote their work—frequently at his own expense, without expecting or receiving reimbursement. His dedication to uplifting others, especially young artists far from home, was always sincere and generous.

Erden is one of the most thoughtful and kind-hearted people I have known. In every setting—whether formal or social—he listens with care, speaks with humility, and steps up to help when help is needed. His passion for food and culture made him a connector of people, always using shared experiences to build bridges across communities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Corporation

As a U.S. citizen of Greek origin who was born in Brooklyn but spent much of my life in Greece and Turkey, I've always appreciated people who can bring different cultures together. Erden is such a person. His generosity, curiosity, and genuine warmth have made him a true ambassador of goodwill among those who know him.

I hope you will consider this perspective as part of the fuller picture of Erden Arkan—a man who has spent his life giving to others without asking for anything in return. I am happy to answer any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Christian Karavolas

President of [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] 503-888-8888  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# EXHIBIT 38

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

I am the owner of [REDACTED] Inc., where I use my twenty-six years of expertise in project management and procurement to drive innovative solutions in the residential and commercial construction sectors.

I have known Erden Arkan since 1996, when I first arrived in New York from Turkey. My father, who trusted him deeply, gave me Erden's number as an emergency contact—and he has remained that person in my life ever since.

Erden gave me my first job in the U.S. as a site architect at his firm. More importantly, he became a mentor and a steady source of support, encouraging me as I built my own business. His guidance, generosity, and quiet strength have been invaluable to me.

But what stands out most about Erden is his deep commitment to the Turkish-American community. He is the person everyone turns to—whether it's finding work, adjusting to a new life, or bringing people together through cultural events. I experienced this personally when he helped make our Classical Turkish Music choir concerts possible through his generous support. That kind of contribution, both financial and moral, is what defines him.

Erden Arkan is a man of integrity and service. I have looked up to him for nearly three decades and am proud to call him my mentor and friend. I can be reached at [REDACTED] if you have any further questions.

With respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Onural".

Elif Onural

# EXHIBIT 39

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

Allow me to briefly introduce myself. After graduating from Robert College in Istanbul in [REDACTED] and the Middle East Technical University in 1975, I began my career in marine insurance as [REDACTED] in Istanbul. I served as one of the first members of the Turkish Chamber of Shipping Assembly and represented Turkey at the International Chamber of Shipping in London in the 1980s. I've lectured at [REDACTED] led marine operations in the U.S. for international brokers, and served as Chairman of the Turkish American Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Currently, I am on the board of [REDACTED] in Istanbul and a member of [REDACTED]. I also lecture at the [REDACTED].

I am writing this letter on behalf of my dear and long-time friend, Erden Arkan. I have known Erden since the 1980s, when he was married to Itir. Together, they raised two beautiful daughters. I came to know Erden through my late college friend, Füsün Ateşer, who was a mutual friend of Itir and me. Over the years, our connection grew into a deep and enduring friendship.

Erden and Itir eventually moved to New York, where Erden pursued a successful career in construction as a civil engineer, and Itir became a beloved and accomplished math teacher, educating young students in New York schools. Together, they raised their daughters with love and care, both of whom have grown into accomplished women who now have families of their own.

Throughout his career, Erden became a respected entrepreneur in real estate development in the New York area. Beyond his professional achievements, he has always been a generous and devoted philanthropist, supporting communities in need and working to strengthen social foundations. We spent many years together in nonprofit work, including our time at Forum, where we helped young entrepreneurs adapt to American culture and business ethics.

Erden has always been a role model—not only as a dedicated father but also as a loyal and selfless friend. There's a saying: "You can't choose your brother, but you can choose your friend." I think of this often when I reflect on how fortunate I was to choose Erden as my friend over 40 years ago.

Erden's humanitarian spirit—both in personal relationships and in the wider community—has always guided his actions. I share these reflections sincerely and without bias. As a proud U.S.



citizen, I have the utmost faith in the American justice system and in God. I trust that the court will weigh Erden's true character and lifelong contributions when making its decision.

I respectfully request that the Honorable Court consider every measure of leniency within the boundaries of the law in Erden's case. He has touched many lives, including mine, and I know in my heart he will continue to do so.

With all my respect and faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pasquini", is written over a large black rectangular redaction box.



May 16th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Bener Bilgin, and I am the owner of [REDACTED]. Our establishment has been serving the community from the same location for over 22 years and is well known in the neighborhood.

I have known Mr. Erden Arkan for almost 20 years. We met through our community in Williamsburg, where his main office was located right next to our restaurant. Because of this, we had many chances to see each other often.

Mr. Arkan is truly a gentle and generous person—always looking to help people in our community not only to improve financially, but also by being a mentor and sharing his wisdom. He is consistently respectful and carries himself with dignity and kindness.

We often cross paths at community meetings, activities, and fundraising events, such as those organized by the *Bridge to Türkiye* Fund. This foundation works to ensure that every child in Türkiye can enjoy a future enriched by quality education. Today, it has reached over 850,000 children across Türkiye, nurturing their potential, and lighting the path to brighter futures. Mr. Erden played an important role in helping the foundation grow to where it is now.

His kindness and willingness to support others are unmatched. He is simply a beautiful human. His kindness and willingness is nothing to compare but just being a beautiful person as he is and always been. We truly love him.

Kind Regards,



Bener Bilgin

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

E-Mail: info@ [REDACTED]

May 16th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

I am an [REDACTED] and a [REDACTED] practicing and teaching in New York City for more than three decades.

I met Mr. Arkan in 1996, attending a small gathering of Turkish professionals at the home of Oguz Gürsel, who was the founder of the construction company named KISKA in the USA. KISKA was originally founded in Europe by Gerald Kiska and was involved in many interesting and challenging infrastructure projects. Mr. Gürsel introduced me to Mr. Arkan and suggested that the New York firm should engage other Turkish professional in their work.

Subsequently my firm was hired by KISKA to design a challenging residential project in College Point, Queens NY that involved the restoration of the historic home of Oscar Hammerstein and the creation of a small group of new residential buildings that would be appropriate to the scale of the historic building to make an new enclave to resonate the old artists' settlement which was formed around the home of Oscar Hammerstein's theatre and music collaborators. With an architecture degree from Istanbul Technical University, Mr. Arkan was most attentive to the historic value of the mansion and its materials and detailing. With his leadership and respectful input, we were successful in saving this building and its unique details to bring it back to its old glory.

After this project, my firm grew and became involved with several other historic preservation projects in SoHo historic District in New York and Cornell University Mann Library in Ithaca and received an Excellence in Preservation Award from the Preservation League of New York in 2002.

After the conclusion of the project in College Point, we worked on a concrete testing Laboratory for DEP with KISKA. The firm's experience in Europe in making tunnels for transportation in Europe, they were able to win the commission to create a new substation for waterworks 500feet below the earth level by freezing the ground around the site of the monumental scale room for freshwater valves that still serves the city of New York. Mr. Arkan was again most respectful and excited about being part of this project. We had very productive conversations during the project, and I met his family and his two daughters and became friends with them.

Our last project for KISKA was the Mt. Morris Condominium in Harlem in 2005. Again, a challenging preservation project turning a historic women's day prison into a luxury residential apartment building among some of the oldest brownstones owned by a significant number of black artists and businesspeople in NYC.

While working on those projects and the subsequent decades, meeting during some Turkish group art and social gatherings we remained friends with Mr. Arkan and his family. Now his daughters grew up and became parents as well and he and his wife Itir are exemplary grandparents.

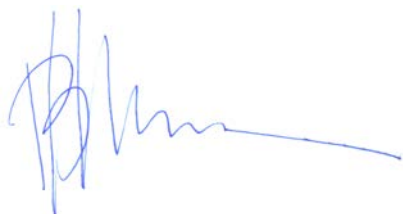
Mr. Arkan served the Turkish community and all of his professional associates with respect and generosity and people become used to his leadership to gather them in the yearly KISKA (later KSK...) parties, celebration of Turkish republic anniversaries, etc., Recently he has also taken interest in the community of the Turkish artists and contributed his knowledge and funds to promo their work globally.

I frequently received a note from Mr. Arkan requesting my assistance for a son or daughter of one of his acquaintances for my advice about their architectural studies in the United States or sending me their resumes to gain employment in my firm. Some of these people did become part of my firm, and I still have warm and productive professional involvement with many of them.

In summary, I know Mr. Arkan as a very honorable and intelligent man, highly qualified to direct KSK with his professional and technical skills.

Sincerely,

Beyhan Karahan, [REDACTED]

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Beyhan Karahan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Cetin Tarlan. I am 74 years old, born and raised in Turkey, and have been living in Brussels, Belgium since 1978. I hold both Turkish and Belgian nationalities. I am married, with two daughters and four grandchildren, all residing in Brussels. I am a graduate of Bosphorus University in Istanbul and the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the UK, holding B.Sc and M.Sc degrees in Chemical Engineering. Now retired, my professional career spanned over 40 years, with the final 25 years as an official at the European Commission in Brussels.

I have known Erden Arkan for more than 50 years. My friendship with both Erden and his wife, Itir, dates back to our university years in the 1970s in Istanbul. I have always considered them among my dearest friends—like a sister and brother to me. Though our professional lives took us in different directions, our bond has remained strong over the decades. We have stayed in touch and reunited whenever possible during holidays in the U.S., Europe, and Turkey.

Erden holds a unique place among my lifelong friends. We met at university, both of us coming from middle-class families in Izmir. Even then, Erden was true, reliable, kind, and most notably, modest and generous. Through decades of hard work, he rose from an entry-level employee to leading a respected construction company in New York. Despite his success, Erden has never changed—he remained the same genuine, humble, and thoughtful friend. His spontaneous calls to check in with a simple “hello” or “how is your family?” have always brought me joy. From afar, I have admired Erden’s deep devotion as a husband, father, and grandfather—qualities I hold in the highest regard and even envy, as they are not easy to attain. His kindness and generosity extend beyond his family to those around him, particularly his employees. I witnessed this firsthand during our visits to Turkey, seeing how warmly he treated the family who helps take care of their summer home in Akyaka. While I never pried into personal matters, I gathered that Erden not only paid fair wages but also went above and beyond to help with their needs—health concerns, children's education, and overall well-being.

These qualities explain why Erden has held such a special place in my life for over 50 years, and why he always will. His unwavering integrity, kindness, and humility define the man I am proud to call my friend.

Respectfully,

  
Cetin TARLAN



May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Christos Triantopoulos, and I am writing this letter to offer a character reference for Mr. Erden Arkan. I have known Mr. Arkan since the year 2000, when I began as a subcontractor for his company. Over the past two decades, he has become far more than a professional relationship to me—he has been a mentor in my professional life and an uncle-like figure in my personal one.

Mr. Arkan is someone who has earned my deepest respect, not just through his leadership and integrity in the workplace, but through the way he supports people during the hardest moments of their lives. I have many fond memories and stories with Mr. Arkan, but there are two moments in particular that will always stay with me.

The first was when my father suffered a serious accident on a jobsite. Mr. Arkan didn't hesitate—he rushed to the hospital and offered every kind of support my family and I needed to get through that difficult time. His actions went far beyond any expectation; they reflected genuine care, compassion, and loyalty.

The second moment was in April 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when I lost my mother to [REDACTED]. Many people reached out to offer their condolences, but Mr. Arkan's call stood out. His words brought me comfort and peace when I was at my lowest. It wasn't just what he said—it was the sincerity behind it, and the feeling that I wasn't alone in my grief.

These are just a few examples of the kind of man Mr. Arkan is—loyal, supportive, and deeply human. While I understand that he is now before the court, I ask you to consider the character of the person I have known for nearly 25 years. He has helped shape who I am today through his actions and example, and I am just one of many whose lives he has touched.

Sincerely,  
*Christos Triantopoulos*  
Christos Triantopoulos

[REDACTED]  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
Cell: [REDACTED]  
NYC WBE Certified  
NYC Licensed GC

May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Don Buckley. I am an [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] currently teaching [REDACTED], as well as [REDACTED].

I have known Erden Arkan for over 30 years. We first met through his family when I worked with his wife at Marymount School of NYC. We were both educators there, co-teaching 11th-grade physics. I also had the pleasure of teaching his second daughter, Canem, in both her sophomore and junior years of chemistry.

Erden's warmth, integrity, and generosity were evident from the very beginning, both in social settings and through the deep care he shows to his family and friends.

One moment that particularly stands out in my memory is a trip my wife and I took in the summer of 2003. We traveled to Turkey and met up with the Arkan family for a road trip along the Turkish coast—from Bodrum to Antalya (or possibly the reverse!). Erden and his family were genuinely excited to share their home country with us, first-time visitors. Along the way, we were introduced to many of their friends, all of whom were as warm, open, and kind as the Arkan family themselves. That experience offered a deeper glimpse into Erden's character—his pride in his culture, his love for sharing it with others, and his ability to make anyone feel welcomed and valued.

In New York City, I've witnessed Erden's quiet yet consistent support of others. He has built a wide and diverse circle that spans industries, backgrounds, and communities. Whether it's through his personal connections, community involvement, or simple acts of generosity, Erden has always made it a point to uplift those around him. His kindness knows no bounds and is not limited by nationality or background—he connects with people of all walks of life.

Erden Arkan is, without question, one of the most decent, sincere, and community-minded individuals I've had the pleasure of knowing.

Sincerely,



Don Buckley

[REDACTED]

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Evren Ay. I am the founder of [REDACTED] a global translation technology platform based in New York, and a long-time member of the Turkish-American community. I also served as Executive Director of the Federation of Turkish American Associations, organizing the Turkish American Day Parade and month-long festivities in Manhattan. I have known Mr. Erden Arkan for nearly 25 years—since we first met in 2000, when I led the Federation’s efforts to unite and strengthen our Turkish-American community.

Mr. Arkan stood out—not only as a supporter of these events but as a calming and constructive presence in our community. He regularly brought people together and helped us resolve disagreements in a respectful and effective way. His dedication to community cohesion left a lasting impact on me and many others.

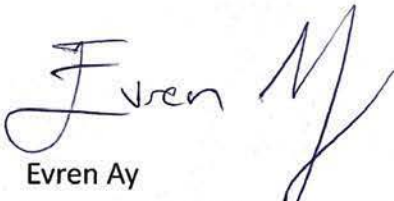
On a more personal level, Mr. Arkan and his wife were incredibly supportive to me and my family when we were navigating the complex private school application process for our children as first-generation immigrants in New York. Their guidance, perspective, and willingness to help made a stressful time much more manageable.

One specific moment that has stayed with me occurred during a community event hosted by the Federation. Although Mr. Arkan had been formally invited, he quietly insisted on paying his own way. He told me, “It’s an honor to be invited, but I believe in contributing to causes—and I wish everyone did so.” As a younger man at the time, that small but powerful gesture made a strong impression on me.

Mr. Arkan has always struck me as a generous, smart, and humble person. He values people above all and is always willing to lend a hand when given the opportunity. His actions over the past two decades have shown a consistent dedication to doing what is right—for individuals, for the Turkish-American community, and for the city we all share.

It is with this background and in full sincerity that I offer this character reference. I believe Mr. Arkan to be a good and principled man, and I hope my words offer some perspective into the kind of person he has always been. Please feel free to reach out to me [REDACTED] if you have any further questions and concerns.

Respectfully,

  
Evren Ay  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



May 19th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your honor,

My name is Gail Rosen. I am retired [REDACTED] who lives in Airmont, NY. I have known Erden Arkan for over 30-years now (as my son is married to his daughter) and I can honestly say he is the most gentle and kindest man I have ever met.

Thirty years ago, when our children first started dating, I was concerned because of our very different backgrounds — Arkans are Turkish, and we are Jewish. I thought there may be some cultural difficulty or bias. There was none.

Erden was wonderful to and trusting of Mark very early on. They got along very well, and Mark was always welcome and highly respected in their home. My late husband and Erden also got along very well. Two businessmen who became fast friends. We all became good friends, not just in-laws and shared lots of love and laughs and even vacations together.

From this union we eventually became grandparents and let me tell you - there was nothing that man wouldn't do for those kids. He was always there when needed, wearing his incredible smile, cooking lots of new and delicious recipes and always willing to help in any way he could. I can honestly say anyone could see that it was his absolute pleasure to chauffeur and feed and hug and love those kids. I adore my grandchildren as well but can't say that I would be there every morning and afternoon to drive them to school. I certainly wouldn't have a delicious homemade breakfast to bring them in the car. That was special to Erden.

Erden had great compassion and looked truly stricken when my husband died. We asked him to be one of the bearers of his coffin along with my son and my husband's two long time best friends. He was honored and we were honored.

I'm going to digress for a moment because just writing about Erden and not recognizing his wife Itir and his two incredible daughters doesn't seem a complete picture to me. I honestly cannot say enough good about any of them either. He and wife brought into this world two smart, kind, beautiful, open-minded, compassionate, honest, gentle, and charitable daughters. The girls couldn't be the wonderful people they are without their parents. My family was and is blessed to know them and call them friends and family as well.

With respect,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail Rosen". The ink is dark and the signature is written on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Gail Rosen  
[REDACTED]

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Ilgar Peker. I am the 65-year-old proprietor of the restaurant, [REDACTED] one of the iconic Turkish establishments of New York. [REDACTED] achieved the success of being the first Turkish restaurant in New York to generate nearly 5 million dollars in revenue per year. It has been operating successfully for over 30 years. And as it turns out, it was instrumental to me meeting Erden Arkan.

From the moment we met, our shared backgrounds—as architects and lovers of Turkish cuisine—created a natural connection. Erden is one of the most genuinely kind, generous, and dedicated people I have ever met. He is always warm, welcoming, and ready to help those around him—qualities that have remained constant over the decades I’ve known him.

His contributions to the community are nothing short of inspiring. I have had the honor of providing catering for many charity events that he personally initiated and supported. He’s brought guests to my restaurant, recommended my business to his friends, and always uplifted others without expecting anything in return.

On a more personal note, when I was working to buy a home years ago and didn’t yet have sufficient credit history, Erden stepped in to help me. Thanks to his support, I was able to purchase my first home—something I couldn’t have done without him. And he didn’t stop there—he visited often during the renovations, offering advice and encouragement like a true friend.

I’ve seen, time and again, how deeply respected he is by those around him. His friends and family speak so highly of his devotion as a father, and as a husband. And I’ve seen for myself what a kind-hearted and loyal person he is. In a community I’ve known well for many years, he remains one of the rarest souls—deeply good, deeply generous, and deeply loved.

It has been one of the great privileges of my life to know him. Please let me know if there are any additional questions I can answer.

Sincerely,



Ilgar Peker,  
[REDACTED]

May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

We are [REDACTED] Arzu Kovanlikaya and [REDACTED] Ilhami Kovanlikaya, a husband and wife who have both worked as [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] since 2007. Arzu is a [REDACTED] and Ilhami is [REDACTED]. In both our professional and personal lives, we are deeply committed to our community, and we write this letter as a testament to the character of our friend, Erden.

We have known Erden and his wife, Itir, since approximately 2013, having first met them at a social gathering in Great Neck hosted by mutual friends. With shared cultural roots—being born and raised in Turkey—our friendship grew quickly and meaningfully over the years. Erden is the kind of friend you can count on in both celebration and crisis. We recall, with deep appreciation, the night in March 2015 when Erden brought home-cooked soup to the hospital while Ilhami was recovering from open-heart surgery. That small but powerful act of kindness spoke volumes about his character.

Erden has personally helped us in countless ways, including organizing the renovation of our Manhattan apartment in 2021—something we would not have managed without his steady and patient guidance, especially as we juggled demanding medical careers and the complexities of coop board regulations. His support extends well beyond his professional background in construction and architecture. He was instrumental in establishing the first Anatolian Art Festival in 2022, creating a platform to celebrate artists, musicians, and cultural expression. Within the Turkish-American community in New York, Erden is widely known and respected as someone who values justice, equality, and democracy. He is a man of his word, a man of principle, and a loyal friend.

We write this letter also with the awareness that Erden is now facing a serious personal reckoning. He has expressed deep and unreserved remorse for his actions. He has accepted responsibility without defensiveness and has been open about the consequences of his behavior. He has assured us, sincerely and repeatedly, that nothing like this will ever happen again.

The fallout from this situation has already affected him profoundly. His personal and professional reputation—something he has built over decades with honesty, generosity, and integrity—has been deeply wounded. Within our community, many of us were shocked to hear of this situation because it was so inconsistent with the person we've come to know over the years. Erden understands the magnitude of what has happened and has spent time and effort in rebuilding that trust through community outreach. He has even personally apologized to everyone he felt he may have hurt with great humility.

Erden is resolute in his commitment to never repeat the mistakes that led him to this point. His family, friends, and community mean everything to him, and he will not put them—or himself—in this position again. We have no doubt that this experience has changed him. If anything, it has deepened his empathy and his sense of accountability. We believe in the strength of his character and in his ability to move forward with renewed purpose.

Erden is a loving husband, father, and grandfather. He begins each day baking for his grandchildren, whom he drove to school for many years with joy and devotion. He is the kind of person who shows love through action—whether it's feeding those he cares about or showing up without hesitation when someone is in need. His generosity, kindness, and community-minded spirit are constants in his life. We trust him deeply, so much so that we have long dreamed of retiring in the same community, side by side with Erden and Itir.

We respectfully ask that you take this letter into account as you consider Erden's future. He is a man who made a mistake, but he is also a man of substance, compassion, and integrity who is doing all he can to make things right. We can be reached at [REDACTED] (Arzu) or [REDACTED] (Ilhami) if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Arzu

Kovanlikaya

Digitally signed by Arzu  
Kovanlikaya  
Date: 2025.05.11 14:09:57  
-04'00'

Arzu Kovanlikaya, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Ilhami Kovanlikaya, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Moris Roso. I am the [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], an insurance brokerage and advisory firm in NYC. I have been a resident of NYC since 1997 and a member of the Turkish community for the past 25+ years.

I have known Erden Arkan professionally and personally, since 2001 when we were both members of Turkish American Business Forum (TABF), a business networking organization helping professionals and business owners in the tri-state area foster relationships within the community, grow and learn. Personally, our families have been close friends for 15+ years spending time at various social gatherings and each other's homes. He is an amazing cook and bakes the most delicious pastries.

In 2016, when my wife was out of the country for an extended period tending to her ill mother, I stayed back with two young kids. During this time, he generously offered to pick up and drive our 8-year-old daughter to school every day with his grandkids and give them his pastries. His wife, Itir, a high school math teacher, has tutored the same daughter in 9th and 10th grades (at times remotely while they were vacationing) and would not accept any compensation.

I established my own insurance brokerage practice in 2001 with just a handful of clients. In late 2002, I remember sitting next to him at a dinner hosted by TABF at Pescatore on 2nd Avenue where I got to know him well for the first time and tell him about my nascent business. He was very engaged and wanted to hear about my business and personal background. At the time, he was the President of a large construction company in NY and thinking that every young entrepreneur from his community deserved a break; he immediately scheduled a meeting with his office. After several meetings, they named me broker for their employee benefits plans replacing their longtime broker. Knowing that an established, large company had trusted me with their insurance was not only financially rewarding but also a huge self-confidence boost for someone starting a new venture. He has continued his generosity by giving my contact information proactively to anyone in need of insurance advice, which has led to numerous business opportunities for me. Our business relationship continues to date.

I know I am not alone with the sentiment about Mr. Arkan's generosity and selflessness towards his community as I have attended many functions advocated and sponsored by him supporting artists, students and entrepreneurs. I can categorically say that he has never shied away from extending a helping hand for anyone in need of advice or a referral in our community.

Sincerely,



Moris Roso

[REDACTED] [com](#)

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

I met Erden Arkan in the early 1990s shortly after he came to the United States. He was in his early forties and had arrived in the US as an employee of KiSKA construction, a large Turkish construction company. At the time, I was the Chief Lending officer of [REDACTED]. Since then, I have had a long career in banking. I have served various rolls at [REDACTED] and then became the [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. Following my retirement in 2018, I was invited to join the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Our bank first began working with KISKA, and several years later, when Erden Arkan founded KSK Inc., we continued our business relationship with him. Throughout the years, Erden consistently demonstrated the highest level of professionalism. He was always respectful of our institution and took great care to strictly and promptly adhere to all loan terms. His reliability, courtesy, and integrity quickly made him one of our bank's most valued and trusted clients.

I remember that Erden was a family man, who was immensely proud of his daughters having been admitted into the best universities in the US. Being an immigrant myself, it was not hard for me to appreciate Erden's commitment to hard work and his dedication to his family.

I have not spoken to Erden in several years. Therefore, I am not familiar with the details in his legal case, except for what is in the public record. I have, however, no doubt that Erden is a kind man, who is in no way a threat to society. I can be reached at [REDACTED] if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Nicos Katsoulis



May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Zehra Özge Yılmaz Peker. I'm a 49-year-old working professional currently living in Houston with my husband and our two daughters. Though I moved away from New York in 2016 after the birth of my younger daughter, the bond I've had with Erden Abi and Itir Abila, has remained a lasting and inspiring part of my life.

Erden Abi has always been more than a friend—he is a role model, a quiet mentor, and a generous soul who gives without asking anything in return. He has supported countless young professionals, often behind the scenes, connecting people with job opportunities, offering business introductions, sponsoring cultural events or simply being there with a listening ear and kind advice. He does all this with humility and warmth, always downplaying his impact by saying, "You're smart, you did it."

One moment that changed the course of my life came when my husband and I were newly married and struggling to find a home in NY we could afford. With limited resources and a lot of uncertainty, it was Erden Abi who believed in us. He reassured us that we were capable and resilient and offered to be a reference for our first home purchase and personally not only introduced but also worked with us to make it happen. That act of belief and support helped us take a life-changing step and laid the foundation for the life we built as a family. I know for certain we are not the only ones with such a story—his influence and kindness have rippled through so many lives.

Erden Abi and Itir Abila are the kind of people you feel lucky to know—grounded, wise, generous, and full of heart. They represent the very best of what it means to build and give back to a community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of further support. I am proud to know and stand behind Erden and Itir Arkan.

Warmly,



Zehra Özge Yılmaz Peker

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

May 15th, 2025

Your Honor,

My name is Reha Durakoglu. I am a small business owner and currently living in Turkiye.

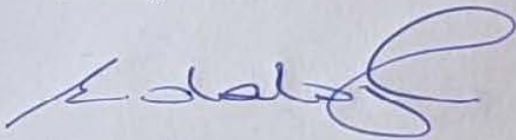
My family has had the privilege of knowing Erden Arkan and his family for many years. We first met in 1995, when we began working together in the construction field. My team and I had the opportunity to collaborate with him on numerous renovation and building projects, always under his leadership and guidance. From the very beginning, it was clear that Erden was not only extremely professional and experienced, but also a man of deep integrity and unwavering work ethic.

Over time, Erden became much more than a colleague—he became a mentor to me. As I built my own path in the United States, especially in the world of business, his advice and example helped guide me. He was someone I could always turn to, and I learned so much just by working alongside him. His mentorship played a meaningful role in my growth, and I remain grateful to him for that to this day.

Erden is a devoted family man, a loving husband, and a truly loyal friend. The impact he had on my life extended well beyond the job site—his presence in my personal life has been just as significant and valuable.

Although I left the United States in 2005 and ended my business activities, we have always kept in touch. Every time Erden and his family visit Turkiye, we make the time to reconnect, share memories, and strengthen our enduring friendship.

Sincerely,



Reha Durakoglu

■■■■■■■■■■

Adress : ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■

■■■■■■■■■■/TURKIYE




May 23, 2025

**Re: Erden Arkan**

To Whom It May Concern:

I proudly present this letter in support of Mr. Erden Arkan. My family-owned business has worked with Mr. Arkan for over 20 years. He has ALWAYS conducted himself as a professional businessman and even more so as a gentleman. In today's construction industry you rarely find the type of character that is exemplified by Mr. Arkan. On a more personal level, I have been to many social events with Mr. Arkan. He has demonstrated strong character and integrity for which I am honored to call him my friend. I fully vouch for Mr. Erkan, and I am confident that he will continue to be a special "grandfather-figure" to the industry and New York community.

Thank you,



Scott Domansky



**Seyhan Erden**

Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics  
Columbia University  
35 Riverside Drive #5  
New York, NY 10023

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Judge Ho

**Re: Character Reference for Mr. Erden Arkan**

Dear Judge Ho,

I am writing to you in my personal capacity to offer my wholehearted support for Mr. Erden Arkan, a close friend of mine for over twenty-two years. I am a [REDACTED] in the Department of [REDACTED] at [REDACTED], and throughout my academic and professional career, I have been fortunate to meet many remarkable individuals. However, few have left as profound and lasting an impression on me as Mr. Arkan.

I first met Erden through Turkish American Business Forum events, where his generosity and willingness to support the community immediately stood out. During my time as president of the Forum, Erden was always ready to lend a helping hand, offering his time, resources, and thoughtful advice without ever seeking recognition. His kindness and compassion are simply part of who he is.

Our friendship deepened beyond professional settings, and Erden and his wife, Itir, have since become close family friends. On a personal level, Erden's selflessness has been extraordinary. Years ago, when I was considering purchasing an apartment in Manhattan, I turned to him for advice. Without hesitation, Erden visited numerous apartments with me, offering his honest and knowledgeable opinions on potential renovations. When I eventually purchased a landmark property, Erden took it upon himself to oversee the entire renovation process. He visited the site daily, ensuring every detail was handled with care and precision — all of this done pro bono, purely out of his generosity and desire to help a friend.

Beyond his friendships, Erden's devotion to his family is exemplary. He starts each day by preparing fresh pastries for his grandchildren's breakfast and tirelessly drives them to school. He is a constant, loving presence in their lives, always ready to play, listen, and support them. His four grandchildren adore him, and his unwavering dedication to his family speaks volumes about his character.

Mr. Arkan has expressed profound remorse for his involvement in the circumstances that have led to this case. I know him to be a person of integrity, and this experience has deeply affected

him. The emotional and reputational toll he has endured is already significant. He has suffered both personally and professionally, bearing the weight of his actions with sincere regret.

I firmly believe that Mr. Arkan will not reoffend. This incident is a painful anomaly in an otherwise honorable life defined by generosity, kindness, and selfless service to others. Additional punishment would only add to the heavy burden he already carries. He has learned a harsh lesson, and the consequences he has faced thus far have been deeply felt.

Your Honor, I respectfully ask that you take into consideration the person Erden Arkan truly is — a devoted family man, a loyal friend, and a compassionate member of his community. Thank you for taking the time to review my letter. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED] [com](#).

*Seyhan Erden*

Respectfully,  
Seyhan Erden

[REDACTED]

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

05/15/2025

To the Honorable Judge,

My name is [REDACTED] Sukru Emre, and I am writing this letter to offer my personal and professional testimony regarding the character of Mr. Erden Arkan, whom I have known for more than thirty-five years. I understand he is currently before the Court in a criminal matter. While I do not claim to know the specifics of the case, I feel it is my moral responsibility to speak to the man I have come to know, respect, and deeply admire over the course of our long-standing friendship.

I am a retired [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and have lived and worked both in NY [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and in New Haven, Connecticut [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for several decades. My family and I first met Mr. Arkan shortly after immigrating to the United States. He was among the very first members of the Turkish-American community to extend a genuine welcome to us, offering not only assistance but comfort, guidance, and reassurance during a period of transition and uncertainty. From those early days, it was immediately apparent that he was a man of quiet strength and unshakable generosity.

Mr. Arkan has long been known in our community as someone who opens his door to others—whether they are strangers, newcomers, or those going through difficult times. He has been an unwavering source of support for countless individuals and families, never seeking credit or recognition for the time, energy, and care he offers so freely. This is not a man who performs goodness when it is convenient or visible. He lives it, day by day.

Over the years, I have observed him in many settings—community gatherings, cultural events, and personal visits. His gentleness with children has always struck me. He has a natural instinct for making young ones feel heard, valued, and respected. Our family had the rare opportunity to spend extended, consistent time with him during a four-year period when his wife tutored our two daughters in mathematics. During the long tutoring sessions in their home, he would regularly prepare something fresh—baking bread or offering tea—and would engage me in conversation. His presence during those times was a kind of steady reassurance, and I often left their home feeling not only more relaxed but genuinely cared for.

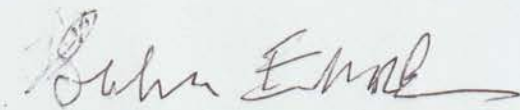
What has always stood out most is how he treated our younger children after the lessons ended. Despite being busy or tired, he never hesitated to give them his time and energy—engaging them in thoughtful conversation, encouraging their ideas, and making sure they left feeling confident and uplifted. In my professional life, I have seen many kinds of caretakers and parents, but I can say without hesitation that he is one of the most compassionate and attentive fathers I have ever known.



I understand the seriousness of the current legal matter, and I do not offer this letter to excuse or minimize any concern the Court may be weighing. Rather, I submit it to offer context—years and years of consistent, observable behavior that speaks to Mr. Arkan’s essential nature. If the Court finds it appropriate to consider character in its deliberations, I hope this letter may serve to illustrate the deeply human, profoundly decent person behind the name.

Should the Court require further information or clarification, I remain at your service.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sukru H. Emre", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sukru H. Emre, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] edu



May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Tolga Topala, and I am a [REDACTED] contractor and [REDACTED]. I had the pleasure of working with Erden Arkan on several projects throughout New York City, where he served as a general contractor, developer, or often both. I am also a fellow graduate of Istanbul Teknik University, which gave us an immediate connection and mutual understanding in our work.

Erden has made a significant impact on my professional life. From the very beginning, he emphasized doing the right thing and maintaining professionalism no matter the frustrations of whatever issue we faced. He was a strong believer in clear, prompt communication—something he modeled consistently—and taught me the value of always being responsive to both clients and colleagues. Rather than getting caught in conflict, Erden approached challenges collaboratively, always seeking to resolve issues with fairness.

One moment that stands out was during a project in Brooklyn, where we were on scaffolding conducting spray testing to ensure the facade was watertight. It was a complex problem with no obvious solution. Erden's remarkable patience in dealing with the many aggravating issues that arose during this project left a lasting impression on me. His hands-on leadership and unwavering focus on quality has helped many raise the bar on their own standards.

Erden's influence continues to shape the way I conduct myself professionally. I consider myself fortunate to have worked alongside someone who led by example.

Sincerely,



Tolga Topala

[REDACTED]

# EXHIBIT 40

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Ben Yakut, and I am a 30-year [REDACTED] who worked in Hospitality, Textile, Retail and Construction industries residing in New York. I have volunteered to foster relations and building bridges between The United States and Turkey through art, music and cultural exchange. I am a Co-Founder of The Moon and Stars Project Inc. (a non-profit) which organized month long festivals from 1999 through 2006 bringing communities together. I served as the President of the Ataturk Chorus (2013-2017) aka TIME (Turkish International Music Ensemble) a non-profit as well and lately singing in Vatan Chorus. Volunteer work is a way of paying back to the community, if not paying forward.

I'm writing this letter to express my full support for Erden Arkan, whom I've known personally and professionally for 28 years. He was my boss at The Marmara Inc., a subsidiary of Kiska Construction Inc., from 1997 until 2010. Working with him during those years left a lasting impact on me and he continues to be my friend to this day.

Erden is a kind, loyal, and deeply decent man. He is someone who has always stood up for decency and democracy — values I've seen him live out every day, not just talked the talk. He's the kind of person who shows up for others, and I've experienced those firsthand many times over the years.

After I spent six years working in the U.S. under an H1-B visa, Erden supported my Green Card application. That kind of support was incredibly meaningful to me, and he offered it without hesitation. Over the years, he's also served as a reference for me in my job searches — including just six months ago when I applied for my current role. His trust and belief in me have meant a great deal, and they've helped me build a stable and successful career.

In 1997, Erden was a Co-Founder of Turkish American Business Forum (aka FORUM) and a Board Member through out the years. With up to 3,000 members, he helped to bring business owners and professionals together and support young entrepreneurs. Besides his business interests, Erden was a strong supporter of art, cultural exchange and community events through sponsorships to MayFest events, NY Turkish Film Festival and several artists exhibiting in The Marmara Gallery.

Not many know the level of Erden's devotion to family. It all starts with Itir, his lifelong love and soulmate. They have been role model couple for many in the community, raising two beautiful children and now they enjoy quality time with their grandchildren. But I should mention one striking detail out of all. In his 60's (not in full retirement yet) Erden woke up very early every morning and took his grandchildren to their daycare and their schools and back for years, just like he did for his children in his 30's. His values, his virtues and his kind spirit have never changed regardless of where he was or what he has in life.

I share these examples to help you see who Erden is, someone who lifts others up, quietly and consistently, with no expectation of anything in return. His warmth, generosity, and integrity have remained steady through all the years I've known him. That is the man I am privileged to get to know since 1997.

I hope this gives you a clearer picture of Erden's true character. I trust him completely, and I'm proud to speak on his behalf.

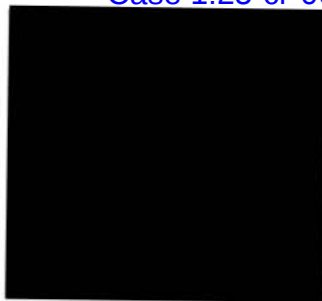
Respectfully,



Ben Cengiz Yakut

# EXHIBIT 41





██████████ Inc.

██████████  
Tel: ██████████ e-mail: info@██████████  
Fax: ██████████ web: www.██████████

May 16th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Erol Benjenk. I am the Executive Vice President of ██████████ ██████████ which manufactures and distributes a wide range of consumable products. Our products are sold in more than 50,000 retail doors in the United States and in more than 25 countries.

I am writing in support of my dear friend Erden Arkan. I have known Erden and his family for more than 30 years. We first met at a social gathering and have remained close ever since, both personally and as active members of the Turkish-American business community.

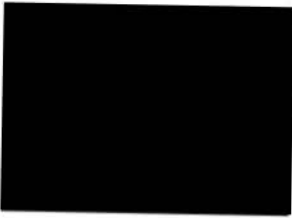
In every interaction I've had with Erden, he has shown himself to be sincere, honorable, generous, and deeply committed to the well-being of others. If I had to summarize Erden in one phrase, it would be: "community over self."

Over the years, I had the privilege of working alongside Erden during the founding of the Turkish American Business Forum, Inc. ("Forum"). In the early 1990s, we were part of a small group of Turkish-American professionals who envisioned a nonprofit organization to foster business opportunities and connections in our adopted country. Erden played a key role in making that vision a reality.

His leadership and presence in New York's residential construction sector gave Forum members access to influential figures in real estate, finance, and retail—connections that would have been difficult for us to forge on our own at the time. Though Erden preferred to stay behind the scenes, his contributions were pivotal. When I served as President of the Forum in the late '90s, Erden's guidance and support were invaluable. I can say with confidence that the Forum's growth and success would not have been possible without him.

As a small business owner for over 30 years, I can also attest to Erden's extraordinary generosity in helping others. I have received more resumes, referrals, and introductions from him than from any other person. Whether it's a recent graduate, a new immigrant, or a fellow professional seeking an opportunity, Erden is

██████████



Tel: [REDACTED] e-mail: [REDACTED]  
Fax: [REDACTED] web: [REDACTED]

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
May 16, 2025  
P2

always ready to lend a hand. His reputation as a connector and mentor is well-earned, and his selflessness is known across our community.

As a Jewish Turkish-American, I've also seen firsthand Erden's role in fostering interfaith dialogue between the Turkish and Jewish communities here in the U.S. He has shown consistent respect, inclusion, and care in these efforts—so much so that many of my American Jewish friends who have met Erden describe him as a true mensch.

What is perhaps most remarkable is that Erden's spirit does not waver even in the face of hardship. Even now, during this difficult chapter of his life, conversations with Erden are still uplifting. He continues to radiate warmth, calm, and perspective.

My wife Rachel and I respectfully hope the Court will view the mistake Erden made as a rare misstep in an otherwise exemplary life. We believe deeply in his character and his contributions, and we ask that they be taken into consideration in his sentencing.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

I can be reached at [REDACTED] or alternatively at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
  
Erol Benjenk, EVP

[REDACTED]

# EXHIBIT 42

May 22nd, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Nurseli Seker. My husband, [REDACTED] Mustafa Seker, and I came to the United States as students in January of 1980. I attended the NYU Stern School of Business, and Mustafa earned his second degree in dentistry from Boston University's Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine.

We met Erden and Itir Arkan in 1986 at a reception at the Turkish Consulate in New York. In a crowded room, Mustafa accidentally stepped on Itir's foot—a humorous and memorable moment that marked the beginning of a lifelong and cherished friendship.

Both Itir and Erden are exceptionally well-educated, generous, and kind-hearted individuals. Erden has always gone out of his way to support the Turkish community. He was one of the founding members of the Turkish American Business Forum, which was created to help Turkish businessmen and students navigate life in the U.S. Erden played a central role in shaping the organization—writing its bylaws, organizing events, and tirelessly encouraging people to support one another. He gave countless hours of his time to help young entrepreneurs connect, learn, and grow.

In the nearly four decades I've known him, I can genuinely say that I have never seen Erden lose his temper or speak harshly to anyone. Think about how rare that is? No matter how stressful the situation, he approaches problems with a smile and a sense of confidence that reassures everyone around him.

After working for 15 years in investment banking, I shifted my focus to real estate and property renovation. Erden was there for me at every step of that transition. He helped me identify trustworthy professionals, answered every question with care and clarity, and made me feel supported and confident in unfamiliar territory. His generosity with his time and knowledge has been a gift I will never forget.

We have also seen firsthand what a devoted husband, loving father, and extraordinary grandfather Erden is. His deep care for his wife Itir, his daughters Gunce and Canem, and his four grandchildren is beautiful to witness. He is truly a man of strength and compassion.

We are fortunate to count Erden as a friend, and I hold him in the highest regard. Please feel free to reach out with questions for us at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nurseli Seker".

Mustafa Seker, [REDACTED]  
Nurseli Seker

# EXHIBIT 43



May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

By way of introduction, my name is Tahir Demircioglu. I am the founder and principal architect of [REDACTED] a boutique architecture firm based in New York City. Since completing my Master of Architecture degree at Texas Tech University, I've been designing buildings and practicing architecture in and around New York since 2001. Over the years, I've had the good fortune to work with many talented people—but few have influenced me as deeply as Mr. Arkan.

I've had the privilege of knowing Mr. Erden Arkan since the early 2000s. We first met at an event hosted by the Turkish American Business Forum, a community organization founded and led by Mr. Arkan and a few of his close colleagues. As a young architect just starting out in New York City, I found the Forum events to be invaluable—spaces where emerging professionals could meet established leaders like Mr. Arkan, who were generous with encouragement. It was through this network that many of us found our footing in a competitive and unfamiliar environment, and I am just one of many who benefited deeply from it.

A few years later, I was invited to speak at a conference at Columbia University organized by MIM—the Society of Turkish American Architects, Engineers and Scientists. MIM is another organization where Mr. Arkan played a major role, contributing almost two decades of his life to building a sense of community and collaboration among Turkish-American professionals. When I was later elected President of MIM, Mr. Arkan was one of the first to offer his support. He not only provided mentorship and guidance but also sponsored several of our key events, from annual conferences to casual networking nights. His presence was always profoundly impactful.

First, Mr. Arkan is a true believer in lifting others as a way of building strength together. His altruism and generosity go well beyond what one might expect from a successful businessman. Through his company, KSK Construction, and through non-profits like MIM and Forum, he's brought together architects, engineers, and professionals from across the Turkish-American community—always without seeking personal gain. I can think of no one who has done more to unify and elevate this community.

Second, he's been personally instrumental in my own professional journey. In early 2013, just two weeks after I had decided to start my own practice, I ran into him by chance at a Turkish grocery store. I was anxious about finding clients and shared my situation with him. Within days, he connected me with a jewelry company looking for an architect to design a new exchange in Midtown. That chance encounter led to my very first commission and became the foundation of my new business. I will never forget that moment, or the way he showed up for me without hesitation.

Finally, I've seen firsthand the respect and decency with which Mr. Arkan treats others—especially in a field like construction, where tensions can run high. From 2014 to 2019, we worked together on a 25-story building in Manhattan, a project that tested everyone involved. Even during setbacks and crises, he

remained soft-spoken, courteous, and solution-oriented. His mantra was always that “human problems require human responses,” and he modeled that belief every step of the way.

To me and many others, Erden Arkan is more than a colleague or community leader—he is the kind of person who makes others feel seen, supported, and capable of more than they thought possible. His impact on both my life and our shared community has been profound.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "T. Demircioglu".

Tahir Demircioglu

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

New York City

# EXHIBIT 44

May 20th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Nilufer Durak. I am the [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], an enterprise software company based in Boston. I have worked for US based multinationals for almost 2 decades before my current role. I am originally from Istanbul, Turkey and lived in New York, Stamford, CT, London, Boston and Istanbul over the course of my professional career.

I met Erden when we were both members of the Turkish American Business Forum in New York. He and I worked on 2 committees together: Women International Network (which later morphed into a standalone social start up TurkishWIN and Events Committee. Our close relationship formed during Forum days continued for many years.

Back in the late 1990s, when I was a young professional in my twenties, I really looked up to Erden. He was a standout figure in the Turkish-American community, not just because of his achievements, but also for how he always had others' backs—especially women. As a dad to two daughters and married to a successful woman, he was all about creating chances for Turkish women to connect, grow, and take the lead. With his encouragement and financial backing of the Forum board, we managed to put together some fantastic events that brought together a diverse group of Turkish women. His friendly and upbeat personality made it possible for us to open doors that might have stayed shut otherwise, allowing us to invite inspiring speakers and build a strong sense of community. In the sometimes-lonely hustle of New York City, Erden became like a big brother to many of us. We really relied on his presence, guidance, and his unwavering belief in the power of community—that's something I'll always remember.

On a personal note, Erden played a huge part in one of the biggest moments of my life: buying my first home in the U.S. He was the one who first got me thinking about real estate as an investment, and more importantly, he helped me believe that I could handle a mortgage on my salary. For a young immigrant woman, taking that step toward the American dream felt like a big deal. Erden didn't just offer practical advice; he also gave me the confidence to believe in myself. His support truly changed my life, and I'll always be thankful for that.

Respectfully.



Nilufer Durak

[REDACTED]  
c: [REDACTED]  
a: [REDACTED]  
w: [REDACTED]



# EXHIBIT 45



May 10th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

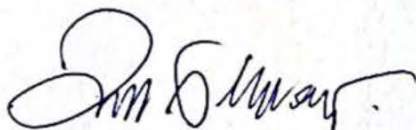
My name is Zeynel Alhan. I have known Mr. Erden Arkan for more than 35 years. We first met in the late 1980s when I was a young engineer involved with MIM (the Turkish Architects, Engineers, and Scientists Association) in New York City. I was serving on the board of directors at the time, and Mr. Arkan quickly became a strong supporter of our work.

He generously provided meeting space at his company for our events, always offering his support without hesitation or expectation. He also contributed to our magazine through advertising and actively promoted MIM's mission, helping bring people together around shared goals and meaningful causes.

Over the years, we have remained in close contact. At one point in my career, I decided to start my own business. I'll never forget how much he believed in me—he gave me the opportunity to work with his team, which was an incredible boost at a critical time. His trust and support made a real difference when I was just starting out.

Mr. Arkan is someone the community can always count on. He is generous, honest, and deeply committed to helping others. I consider myself fortunate to know him and am proud to call him a friend. Please feel free to get in touch with me if you have any questions. I can be reached at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,



Zeynel Alhan

# EXHIBIT 46

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My Name is Erman Agirnasli, I have lived in New York City for the last 12 years. I have been working full time as a [REDACTED] during that time. I graduated from Columbia University in [REDACTED] with a Master of Science in Real Estate Development.

I have known Erden Arkan for almost 25 years. He is my father's joint venture partner in many of their development projects and is his dearest friend. To me, he is the uncle I do not have and my mentor in the real estate industry of New York City.

Every summer throughout college I interned with my father in his real estate development business. I was an eager, young college student looking to learn as much about the real estate industry as possible. Erden saw my enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge and fully embraced me, sharing with me his vast knowledge and deep understanding of real estate and construction. He also made numerous introductions to members of the real estate industry with whom I was able to interact with and learn from. He passionately endorsed my application to Columbia University including writing a heartfelt letter of recommendation. After I graduated, I decided to pursue Real Estate Brokerage as my full-time profession. Erden was instrumental in my success, introducing me to numerous clients, continuing to impart invaluable real estate knowledge on me, and serve as a profound mentor to me both professionally and personally. Four years ago, I purchased an apartment in his most recent development at 570 Broome Street where he also lives. I reside here with my fiancé and am ecstatic to have Erden and his lovely wife Itir as my neighbors.

His “uncle-ness” shows up in both small and big gestures throughout my daily life. When I was in my mid 20's, I decided to embrace philanthropy, and along with a friend of mine formed the Young Professionals for TPF group under Turkish Philanthropy Funds, supporting education for underprivileged girls, natural disaster relief efforts, and aid for children suffering with cancer. When we had fundraising events, I was blessed to have the support of my social network, but only a handful of people participated from the older generation. Of course, Erden was one of these few, again supporting and encouraging me to continue to make a positive impact and foster giving back in the next generation.

Anyone who knows Erden will tell you his cooking/baking is simply phenomenal. When I was a kid, I was a very picky eater but one of my few favorite foods is a savory pastry filled with ground beef. He realized that I love this dish which is not generally popular with a lot people. To

this day, he will sporadically make it and bring it to me. I love receiving a call from him on a Saturday morning because I know there is a very high likelihood, he is calling to tell me that he is stopping by with a freshly baked Borek for me.

I am blessed to have Erden as uncle, mentor, and now neighbor!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Erman', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Erman Agirnasli

# EXHIBIT 47



May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Burak Alpaslan, a [REDACTED] in NYC. Please take this letter as in was intended, a character reference and personal attestation in highest regard, on behalf of Mr. Erden Arkan of KSK LLC of Brooklyn, currently residing in Manhattan, New York.

I have met Erden Agabey and his wife Itir Ablal in 2004, through the Turkish American Business Forum – a membership organization which helps cultivate networking, business opportunities and strong community amongst like-minded Turkish American immigrants in NY Metro area. I call him Erden Agabey meaning older brother in Turkish, as he has been to me, and many others I know.

As I was launching my new financial planning firm and establishing new accounts, he took a liking in me, introduced me to many other affluent Turkish American businesspeople and he not only became a client but also introduced me to many others in his circle - his generosity knows no bounds. I have been, still am and forever will be eternally grateful for his support over many years.

Over the two decades I have known him, he has helped so many Turkic people to find good jobs and broaden their network. He has not only donated to charities directly, but organized fund raisers for our community and for charitable organizations. He has always been the cheerleader, community organizer and the leading supporter for the Turkish community. His support for Bridges of Hope over many years is unforgettable. The Bridges of Hope Project (BOHP) is a not-for-profit-organization with 501c3 status, working to create opportunities for Turkish and Turkish American children and youth to pursue their education and realize their potential.

When the earthquake hit Turkiye and caused a significant amount devastation, loss of life and property, there was Erden Agabey, on the phone, soliciting help, donations and any support to help feed and clothe the survivors of the earthquake in the middle of a severe winter. He was very instrumental encouraging others to use Turkish Philanthropic Fund ([www.tpfund.org](http://www.tpfund.org)) which is a donor advised fund where one can target a specific charity.

It would take too long to remember and write every single instance where I have personally witnessed him as a true gentleman. He is always looking out for the underprivileged and championing causes that are dear to his birth country - I cannot think of anyone else ahead of Erden Agabey in that regard. He is a model citizen, fantastic husband, loving father and grandfather on top of his many business accolades and his significant building projects in New York.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or if I can help him in any way.

Burak N Alpaslan, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Burak Alpaslan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Burak Alpaslan

# EXHIBIT 48

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Your Honor,

My name is Arzu Ertaş. I am [REDACTED] years old, happily married for 35 years, and have a daughter. Trained as an architect, I have spent most of my career representing and consulting for Turkish cabinet manufacturers, supplying products to developers across the U.S. market.

I had the privilege of knowing Erden Arkan since 2008, when I began supplying casework packages for KSK's construction projects. Our relationship began through business, but over time it grew into something much deeper. At first, I respectfully addressed him as "Erden Bey," but it wasn't long before he became "Erden Abi"—a term of endearment and respect, reserved for those we truly admire and trust.

Erden Abi stood out in the New York Turkish community as a figure of quiet strength, grace, and unwavering integrity. He was always kind, always professional—yet never distant. Despite his many accomplishments, he remained humble and approachable. Over the years, we collaborated on dozens of projects, shared business dinners, celebrated family milestones, and attended countless Turkish community events together. In all that time, I cannot recall a single moment when his actions did not reflect the highest character. He was consistent, fair, and true in every setting.

Though our connection was rooted in business, our friendship deepened in a way that never compromised professionalism. In time, I came to see him not only as a trusted colleague and friend, but also as a mentor—someone whose wisdom and calm presence guided me through both opportunities and challenges.

One moment that truly captured his character came during a particularly difficult chapter in my professional life. After parting ways with Lineadecor—a company I had represented for 15 years—I found myself in a financial dispute over several outstanding projects. The situation became complicated, and I realized I needed a neutral, trustworthy person to mediate. In Turkish legal culture, there's a term: Yediemin—a person entrusted with safeguarding disputed matters. Without hesitation, I turned to Erden Abi. He was the only person I could think of who was respected by both sides and could be trusted to help resolve the issue fairly. Thanks to his

involvement—his calm, principled presence and his ability to communicate clearly and respectfully—I was able to recover what was owed to me without needing legal action.

Erden Abi is one of the finest people I have ever known. His kindness, humility, and strength left a lasting impact on everyone who had the good fortune to know him. I am deeply grateful for his friendship and his example.

Thank you,

**Arzu Ertas**



Cell:





# EXHIBIT 49

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

I am Tahir Erimli. I run two businesses in the U.S. [REDACTED] which distributes bakery ovens and equipment, and [REDACTED] the official distributor of [REDACTED] baklava and sweets. I'm writing to share a few thoughts about someone I've been proud to call a friend, mentor, and big brother figure since the first day I arrived in the United States in the early 2000s—Erden Abi. Abi means "brother" in Turkish—and it is an honorific we give to members of our community who are older than us and deserve our respect.

I first got to know Erden Abi through my former company's CEO, who introduced him as someone you could trust completely—a rare mix of knowledge, kindness, and integrity. Whenever our team needed advice during the construction phase of a project in New York City, Erden Abi was the first call we made. He never asked for anything in return—no contracts, no fees—just showed up with his sleeves rolled up, ready to help.

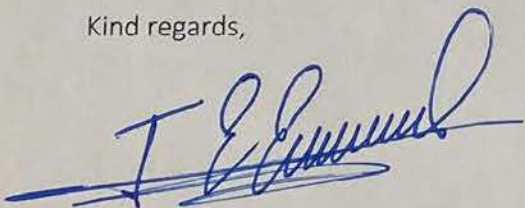
At the time, I was managing both a jewelry business and a real estate development company. Every time I came across a potential site or property, I would immediately reach out to Erden Abi for his input before presenting anything to our headquarters in Turkey. Our CEO is famously hard to please, but if I could say, "Erden Abi approves," that was all it took to move forward. He had that kind of credibility. He always gave honest opinions—even if it wasn't what I wanted to hear—and I learned to value that above all else.

Through all the ups and downs of building a life here as a Turkish-American entrepreneur, Erden Abi has always been a steady presence in my life. He's someone I admire deeply, not just for his knowledge, but for his generosity of spirit and his consistent support of me.

Even now, whenever I mention his name in community gatherings or business circles, I say with pride, "Oh yes, Erden Abi is a good friend of mine."

Thank you for reading. I can be reached at [REDACTED] if you have any further questions.

Kind regards,



Tahir Erimli

# EXHIBIT 50

May 13th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

I first heard the name Erden Arkan in my early years after arriving in the United States, through mutual friends who had already been living here for some time. As an [REDACTED] I was immediately drawn to the fact that he was involved in the construction field — but what stood out even more was how everyone described him: as someone always willing to help others, generous with his time, and committed to supporting his community.

Later, I had the opportunity to meet him in person through various occasions. My wife, Arzu Ertaş, is [REDACTED] and began collaborating on projects with his firm, which gave me the chance to get to know him even better. I've now known of and admired Erden Arkan for nearly 20 years.

Our relationship has grown over time from acquaintance to one of deep respect. I still remember the early days when I would ask him questions about the architectural or construction field — he would sit with me patiently for hours, sharing his vast experience and insights with a rare combination of enthusiasm and humility. It was during those moments that I came to know not just his professional wisdom, but his generous spirit.

Everyone — young and old — refers to him as "Erden Abi."

In Turkish, "abi" means "older brother," but it carries a deeper cultural meaning — it reflects respect, warmth, trust, and an honored place in our hearts and communities. At 65 years old, I can say with certainty that Erden Abi is one of only a few people in my life who has truly earned this title.

No matter how busy he is, he always returns your calls or messages, and he will always do whatever he can to help. Wherever there is an event that benefits humanity, society, or individuals — he is there. Not just present, but actively supporting with sincerity and commitment.

I'd like to share just one small example of his generosity and support: Although he couldn't attend one of my concerts, he still purchased ten tickets and gave them out to music lovers in his community. Thanks to him, more people came to my concert — and for me, that was a meaningful and heartfelt show of support.

To me, Erden Arkan is a man of integrity, compassion, and quiet leadership. The world is a better place because of people like him. I am deeply grateful to know him and will always be proud to call him "Erden Abi."

With great respect,



ISMET ERTAS



# EXHIBIT 51





May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear Mr. Eric Adams,

First, let us express our gratitude to you for taking on the monumental task of running for mayor for this great city of ours. We know it must be challenging especially in the midst of such turbulent times. And thank you as well for coming to visit us in our humble offices, and listening to our concerns and hopes. As front line workers, we promise we are all vaccinated!

KSK Construction and our fellow business associates, have made our living in making New York City into a better, more inclusive place by building offices, houses, hotels, and apartment buildings with sustainability, cost, and aesthetics in mind. We are a business that thrives on efficiency, which is exactly why we are such ardent supporters of your campaign.

Many of us here today are immigrants to this beautiful city. We came to this bursting metropolis with just a few dollars and many ambitions. In the decades that passed, we have built many successful businesses, feeding and clothing not just our families but the families of thousands of other hard working men and women who helped us build this city, brick by brick. We speak for them today as well when we ask for your help in allowing New York City to thrive by:

- **Cutting the red tape.** Too many simple tasks require too much effort, hampering innovation and cost-efficiency. For example, many DOB approvals take months, instead of days. Unnecessary inspections eat up valuable work hours. And often, there seems to be little accountability or institutional memory. We ask your help to bring the City's resources into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- **Cleaning up the streets.** No matter how beautiful a building we build, its value can be quickly diminished by the piles of garbage on the streets in front of it. As New Yorkers, we need prompt street cleanups, beautiful parks and safe playgrounds, speedy snow removal, well-lit paths for bikes. The more livable our city is, the more people will want to come back home to its vibrancy.
- **Lowering crime.** There are too many stories of aggression, theft, and violence on our streets. We all want a safe New York where our children can play outside without fear. Where tourists feel safe and where gun violence is a thing of the past. This is an attainable goal and we will work with you to attain it.
- **Supporting Green Building strategies- LEED or Passive House standard (energy efficient).** In the effort to resolve NYC's housing crisis why not 'go green'? Eco-friendly and cost-effective buildings can even be promoted as affordable Housing for New Yorkers as well as becoming an operation to provide shelter to the homeless and senior living centers, at the same time reducing NYC's ecological footprint.

K S K Construction Group LLC  
136 North 10<sup>th</sup> Street 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Brooklyn NY 11249  
(T) 718.290.9111 (F) 718.290.9112



Mr. Adams, we have been strong supporters of yours since your 2013 campaign for Brooklyn Borough President. We appreciate all the positive changes, the efficiency and the inclusivity that you have brought to Kings County. Now it is time to do the same for all of New York City.

We are with you. You are the people's candidate and you are definitely our candidate!

With high regards,

K S K Construction Group LLC

& Friends

Linea Décor

Oz Steel Inc

SKF Electrical Corp

Agime Group LLC

Ext-Tech LLC

Technic Contracting LLC

Façade 41

Built -Architects

Herrick, Feinstein LLP

WindTrend Façade Technology

Bergen Marble and Granite Inc.

# EXHIBIT 52

May 10th, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho,  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

Erden Arkan is a person who is the 'big brother' of our society in New York. We call him "abi" with all the respect in our hearts.

My name is Ali Sarikaya and I am a professional [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who specializes in helping bridge the Turkish and American art forms via every type of art for the betterment of both of our communities.

I have had the chance to know Erden Arkan and his family very closely since 1996, and we have had years of uninterrupted friendship.

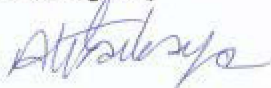
I met him when he was the manager of KISKA, the largest Turkish construction company in America, through his support for art. I know and witness how he has supported all art activities in New York. He has also made a great contribution to my own photography work, both by connecting me with clients and through his own personal patronage. He is always a reliable and honest person towards everyone. For him, people come before money, and human connections are very important.

In my opinion, he is the most important person within our Turkish community with his constant smiling face, positive and devoted approach.

Not only has he made significant contributions to the arts but also to events organized by those who believe that Türkiye's autocratic 23-year rule has undermined democracy and freedom. I myself have served as the New York representative for Türkiye's main opposition party (CHP) during five overseas elections. Since the beginning of Türkiye's overseas voting process, Erden Abi has consistently provided moral support and even volunteered his time to work the ballot box, in the hopes that Turkish elections will be free and fair. With his revolutionary spirit, deep sense of responsibility, and unwavering integrity, he is one of the rare individuals whose word I can always trust.

Erden Abi is a humble person who does not even ask for credit for the help and support he has given over these many many years to literally hundreds of people in his community. That is why it is my special privilege to write this letter to support him. I am sure you will get many others just like it. Feel free to call me with any questions as I am at your disposal [REDACTED]

Best regards,



Ali Sarikaya

# EXHIBIT 53



May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dale E. Ho  
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse  
40 Foley Square  
New York, NY 10007

Your Honor,

My name is Selim Akyuz. Even though Erden Arkan and I are both retired now – we were co-workers as well as partners in business for many decades. We have been friends for the same amount of time.

My relationship with Erden Arkan began over four decades ago, during a business trip to Turkey in 1981. At the time, I was working as a project engineer for [REDACTED], overseeing a feasibility study for a new pulp and paper mill in Samsun. It was during that visit that my dear friend, Samil Tisoglu, introduced me to Erden. Erden shared that he was considering moving to the United States to establish a U.S. office for Kiska Construction.

Shortly thereafter, Erden called to say he had arrived in the U.S.—marking the beginning of a remarkable friendship and professional journey that continues to this day.

Initially, Kiska's plan was to pursue public infrastructure projects. However, to establish a presence, the company began with the development of a high-rise residential building in Manhattan. Unfortunately, by the time the building was completed, the condominium market had significantly declined, and Kiska opted to rent the units instead. Meanwhile, preparations were underway to begin bidding on public works.

During that time, I met with Mr. Gursel (the owner of Kiska) and Erden, and I discussed how I might assist part-time with engineering, construction coordination, and sourcing subcontractors—while I maintained my full-time role elsewhere. Getting that first public project is always the hardest, but Kiska managed to secure a challenging and high-profile contract: the replacement of a bridge over the Long Island Railroad in Port Washington.

The project was a technical test. There was just an 8-inch clearance between the bridge and the catenary lines below. Kiska devised a brilliant solution—designing a demolition containment platform that fit within that narrow space. The project was completed safely and successfully, earning recognition and a commendation from the New York Department of Transportation.

From there, Kiska took on many ambitious public works projects: bridge rehabilitations, pumping stations, and most notably, the Green Line subway extension for WMATA in Washington, D.C. That project presented complex engineering challenges, particularly with the heavy bridging system required for tunnel boring operations. After extensive analysis, Kiska identified flaws in the original design and



proposed a more efficient solution. In collaboration with WMATA's project management and design team, Kiska's recommendations were accepted, resulting in the elimination of a full level of unnecessary bracing. The outcome: a \$300,000 cost saving for the joint venture (Kiska/Kajima), improved construction performance, and no additional claims—further proof of the technical depth and integrity of Kiska's team.

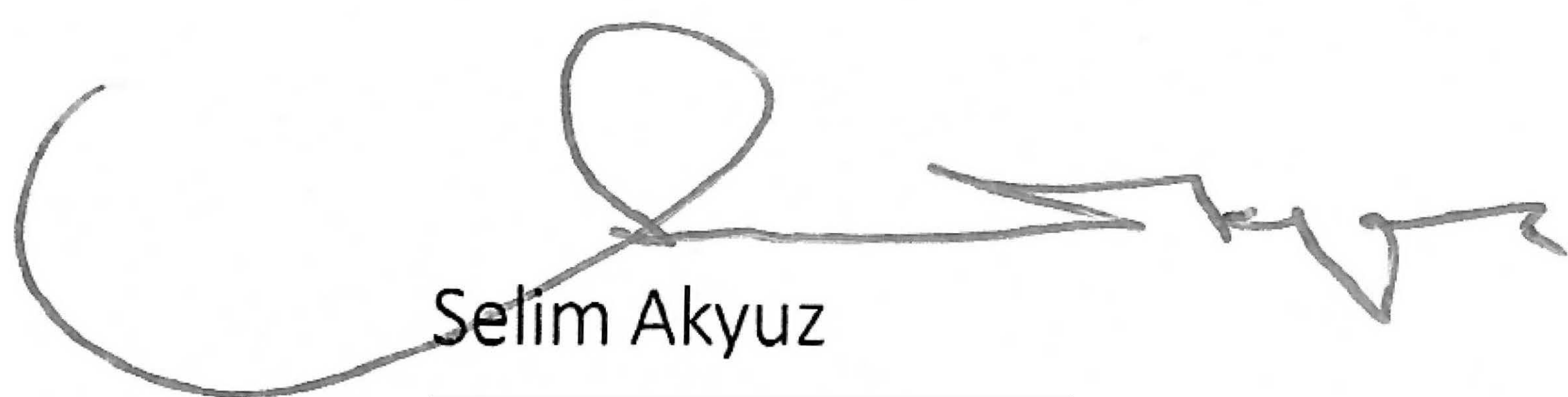
Around 2004, Kiska transitioned into KSK Construction Group. Over the years, we've completed over 70 projects together. Through all these years and ventures, Erden and I grew not only as business partners but as true brothers.

Despite our different backgrounds—I am a devoted Jew with conservative beliefs while Erden embraces a much more liberal ideology —our friendship has only deepened over the decades. We've always shared a profound respect for each other's faiths and values, believing strongly in the freedom of religion and the dignity of all people. I've always admired Erden's unwavering professionalism, his humility, and the way he treats everyone with dignity. In all our years of working together, I've never once seen him insult or belittle anyone.

I want to also add a small side note that when Erden asked me to join the fund-raising efforts for Eric Adams back in 2021, I – as a life-long republican, refused. And he immediately accepted my refusal with grace and did not mention it again. I also know firsthand how remorseful he feels, and he has shared with me that he will never allow himself to repeat such a mistake again. I believe him—because he is a man of integrity who has always taken full responsibility for his actions and their consequences.

It has been one of the great honors of my life to share my career and achievements with Erden.

Feel free to reach out with any questions,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Selim Akyuz', with a large, stylized loop at the beginning and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Selim Akyuz

Two solid black rectangular redaction boxes covering contact information, likely a phone number and an email address.